(c) and (d) Though the Kerala State Government has not supported the import of Coconut oil, no assurance appeals to have been given by the Government in the past not to import Copra or Coconut oil.

Trading in REP Licences

957. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the trading in Replenishment (REP) licences at high premium has become a flourishing business recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) to (c) In terms of para 199 of the Import and Export Policy, 1990-93 (Vol. I), Import Replenishment Licences (REP Licences) are freely transferable. The amount of premium on transfer of such licences is guided by the market forces. Government do not keep any statistics on the premium charged on such transfers.

Introduction of transparent accounting system for banks

958. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a transparent accounting system for the public sector banks; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

Merger of New Bank of India with another Nationalised Bank

959 SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for merging New Bank of India with another nationalised bank;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that almost all the major organisations of bank officers and employees have opposed the proposed merger; and

(d) if so, on what grounds and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Government is not contemplating to merge New Bank of India with another nationalised bank.

(c) and (d) All India New Bank of India Officers Association All India New Bank of India Employees Federation and others have represented to the Government that the merger of New Bank of India with another public sector bank will shake public confidence in public sector banks They have further suggested that New Bank of India should be retained as an independent entity and financial assistance should be provided to ensure its viability

Expiry of the wage agreement in the spinning unit at Chandrapur under NTC

960 SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the terms of the last wage agreement in the Spinning Unit of Chandrapur under the NTC expired long ago; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for which a fresh agreement has not been finalised?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV). (a) and (b) The last long term wage agreement of Associated Industries (Assam) expired on 31.12.1986. Inspite of several conciliation proceedings before Government, it has not been possible to come to any settlement with trade union of workers on account of differences pertaining to revised work norms, Region-cum-Industry formula, production linked wages, heavy losses etc

Retrenchment of 200 casual workers at Associated Industries in Chandrapur

961. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state·

(a) whether it is a fact that there are more than 200 casual workers on "No work no pay basis" at Associated Industries (Assam) in the spinning unit under the N.T.C. at Chandrapur for the last eight years; and

(b) if so, by when their services are likely to be regularised?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV). (a) and (b) There are 136 workers on 'No work no Pay' in Associated Industries (Assam) for the last 8 years. Their status is that of "Badli"|Substitute workers and not of permanent status. In view of heavy losses and surplus employees, their regularisation can be considered only when the financial position improves and depending upon the vacancies in the rationalised sanctioned strength of the mill, as per revised work load norms.

Developing a city as an advanced export zone

962. SHRI SURESH KALMADI Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to constitute a committee to identify a city in the country for developing as an advanced export zone to promote international trade on the pattern of Hong Kong; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS *PATEL) (a) and (b) The Government* of India have set up an Advisory Committee on 24th December, 1990 to examine the desirability and feasibility of setting up a Free Port in the country and to recommend a suitable location therefor

Decentralisation of DGS&D

963. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAKODKAR.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to decentralise the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposal;·

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what will be its likely effects on the economy of the country?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL)· (a) to (c) The entire matter is under review.

Powers of chairmen of nationalised banks

964. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU· Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state·

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairmen of all the nationalised banks